

Sound Off [8-Aug-2010]

A reader recently sent USMNEWS.net a note stating – “Thought you’d like to see this. The language is absurd.” An e-mail from the USM administration was included (and referenced). That e-mail is inserted below:

From: all-facstaff-bounces@usm.edu [all-facstaff-bounces@usm.edu] On Behalf Of USM Mailout [usmmailout@usm.edu]
Sent: Friday, August 06, 2010 11:49 AM
To: all-facstaff@usm.edu; all-students@usm.edu
Subject: [All-facstaff] Out of site! Log onto new Southern Miss look Monday

To the Southern Miss Community:

The University of Southern Mississippi is making great strides in advancing strategic image development efforts with the rollout of a redesign of top-tier Web sections on Aug. 9 and implementation of a refreshed university logo, all spearheaded by the Office of University Communications.

The Web launch represents the first step in creating a more consistent Web presence and strengthening image development and marketing for external audiences. In July, University Communications introduced a new university logo to help improve the university’s visual identity.

These upgrades present an exciting opportunity to enhance the university’s image. Communication is a building block to establishing mutually beneficial relationships with key stakeholders, and each time someone at Southern Miss communicates with external audiences, it leaves an impression. Written and visual communications such as brochures, Web sites or other marketing and public relations materials represent who we are as a university.

Web site redesign

When you log onto www.usm.edu on Aug. 9, you’ll see improved content for prospective students through the Academics, Admissions and Student Life sections, and more visibility for research and community initiatives. You’ll also see a new section for university news, Southern Miss Now.

The simpler, cleaner, more visually appealing design emphasizes better organization and navigation, characteristics identified during December 2009 focus groups with campus constituencies.

The intent is to keep the home page streamlined. Key links for internal audiences such as Current Students and Faculty and Staff are still available in a navigation bar on the home page. iTech is continuing to work on improvements to CampusHUB as a resource for hosting and sharing internal information.

Other upcoming changes over the next few months will include an interactive map and new calendar.

Web Services will coordinate efforts to implement the new logo as efficiently as possible for those who need assistance. The new logo will be substituted for the old one by Sept. 1, where it can be done easily; otherwise, the new logo will need to be incorporated as part of the redesign project’s new template and content management system (CMS). Planning to implement the template and CMS for Phase 2 will progress this fall. Stay tuned for further communications on next steps.

Contact Geoff LoCicero with any comments or questions, Geoff.Locicero@usm.edu<<mailto:Geoff.Locicero@usm.edu>>.

New university logo

New graphic standards are in place to guide the application of this new look for our colleges, schools, departments and other entities. It, and copies of the new logo, are available for download at www.usm.edu/pr/graphstandards<<http://www.usm.edu/pr/graphstandards>>. The manual is the guide to applying our visual image and identity to the materials through which we communicate as a university.

The transition to the new logo will take place gradually through the end of 2010, allowing units time and flexibility to update materials and to incorporate the new logo in a cost-effective manner. Materials that have the previous logo may continue to be used, but units will be asked to incorporate the new logo on any new materials or reprints.

We expect to complete the transition of the new logo by January 2011. Contact Melanie Gardner with any comments or questions, Melanie.Gardner@usm.edu<<mailto:Melanie.Gardner@usm.edu>>.

Final words

We have many things to celebrate and be proud of at Southern Miss. We’ve had a year-long 100th birthday party. Improvements to our campuses are taking place. Graduates are taking on the world, and eager, new faces will be joining us as new students this fall.

In the words of former Alumni Director Powell Ogletree, “It’s great to be a Golden Eagle.” We take pride in our university, and hope you will take pride in our new look as we move forward together.

Your feedback is welcome. Contact Jana Bryant, assistant to the president for University Communications, at 601.266.4491 or Jana.Bryant@usm.edu<<mailto:Jana.Bryant@usm.edu>>.

The reader is right on, the language is quite absurd. These are, however, the ideas for making a university better that come with hiring a communications person like Martha Saunders as president.